



## Workforce reaches 375 at LM Wind Power

Geneviève Gélinas

**GASPÉ:** – The LM Wind Power Gaspé plant now has 375 employees, which is 190 more than in August. The blade manufacturing plant is now trying to recruit 100 more employees, especially production workers. That recruitment is part of a \$12 million plus expansion undertaken to fill orders coming from the American market.

On April 12, director general, Alexandre Boulay, provided an update about the expansion. “The hiring is going well. We’re at 375. There were 185 in August 2016. We still have 100 jobs available. It’s not easy to have such a fast growth, but it’s working well. Every week, there are new employees.”

“LM should reach its objective of 450 to 470 employees in October or in November,” Mr. Boulay states. The plant is recruiting in the Gaspé Peninsula but also outside the region.

“There’s an interest in coming back to the Gaspé.



Photo: G. Gélinas

*LM Wind Power is recruiting a lot of workers from outside the region, who have Gaspesian roots, explains Gaspé plant manager, Alexandre Boulay.*

75% of the new employees these days are from out of the Gaspé. There are maybe 15% from the southern part of the Gaspé and the balance is from Gaspé, but we’ve exhausted the Gaspé labour pool.”

“Among the new employees, a large proportion is from Montréal and its surround-

ings,” says Mr. Boulay. “Many of them have parents who were born in the Gaspé. “We have Tapps, Minvilles, Gleetons and Dupuis who were born in Montréal.”

The lack of housing is becoming apparent in Gaspé. “We’re being told that it’s pretty difficult to find accom-

modation in downtown Gaspé. We tell the new employees to search in neighbouring villages,” reports Mr. Boulay, who is also asking Gaspesians who have vacant housing to inform LM Wind Power.

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### Expansion to be completed by mid-June

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The plant expansion work should be done by mid-June, as expected. The plant surface will be increased by 40%, that is to say 2,700 square meters. The Gaspesian firm LFG Construction is in charge of the work.

Mr. Boulay refuses to divulge what will be the weekly production of LM at the end of the expansion. “We’ll multiply the production we were having one or two years ago,” he just states. LM employees share two daily 12-hour shifts. The plant is working seven days a week.

The director general refuses to give details on the contracts signed by LM but according to information gathered since September 19, the

Gaspé employees are manufacturing 42-meter blades for General Electric. The Gaspé blades will replace components that are at the end of their useful life on wind turbines already erected in USA, including Texas.

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### Still no trains to the Gaspé

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Asked by journalists about the absence of the Quebec government investment in the railway, Alexandre Boulay reiterated the importance of the train to the LM plant. “There’s a fierce competition in the wind energy field. We try to reduce our production costs. The train will have a significant impact on the LM Wind-power competitiveness. We need an upgraded rail to Gaspé for our customers to use it, to improve our competitiveness.”

The blades manufactured in Gaspé are currently moved by transport over 220 kilometers to New Richmond, where they’re loaded on rail cars going to the United States.